

[Unusual Industries]

Interviews

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About 2100 words. Do. Files UNUSUAL INDUSTRIES.

How often it happens that we have become so accustomed to our surroundings that we lose sight of their unusual value, thro" familiarity.

Few people in Union County, New Mexico, stop to reflect any more, on the fact that we have several industries in our midst that many larger towns do not have, and that few, indeed, of the towns the size of Clayton can boast of.

Most of these industries have been in operation amongst us for several years, and we have taken them very much for granted like the air and the sunshine—and taxes. But should we go to a neighboring county, and, in the course of conversation reveal the fact that our boots were made at Spinelli's, in Clayton, we can imagine being asked—"O—do you have a real bootmaker at Clayton?"

Let us imagine a visitor on one of our Union County ranches holding the following conversation with his host:-

"Say, Bob"—(or John, or Pete, or Bill—to suit)- "that's a swell pair of boots you're wearing—where did you pick them up?"

"These boots?—why, Spinelli, in Clayton, made them for me."

"Sure 'nuff? Mighty fine piece o' work. And I like your saddle, too:" stroking it with appreciative fingers.

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"Yes, it's a good one, all right; Deam in Clayton, make it."

"Another Clayton product, eh?"

"Yes—why, come to think of it, this buckskin shirt is a Union County product—and this belt, too—they came from [?] Dunns 2 a few miles out from Clayton. And—gosh—I didn't realise I was such a home [?] affair—this ring was made by [?], in Clayton—"

And so it goes.

Following are given more detailed descriptions of some of the unusual industries found in Union County. CECIL SWAGGERTY.

[?] Swaggerty is primarily in architect by training, being [?] at present with his father in the lumber business at the west end of [?] Court street in Clayton, New Mexico. In addition to this the younger Swaggerty manufactures Spanish style furniture, and [?] two very interesting machines. One of them is called by the Spanish people the malacate, and is used to make wool into yarn. The other is a sort of loom on which can be woven blankets or rugs, in the Navajo style. TONY SPINELLI.

Located on the south side of Main Street, well toward the west end of the block between Front and First street, we find the Clayton Boot and Shoe Hospital, whose proprietor is Tony Spinelli. As at all hospitals, here not only the aged and infirm are repaired and made as good as new, but absolutely new specimens re sent forth to [?] their place in the world, to battle [?] to a good old age.

Mr. Spinelli's is [?] of anything that can be made in leather [?] gear, [?] of his trade [?] resent is in the form of boots and shoes for man.

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He learned his trade in Italy, serving an apprenticeship under Frank Gate in St. Ageta. He began this training at the age of 8 years, and finished it at the age of fourteen years, attending school during all this period of training.

He began making footwear in 1909, and in 1916 established a business of his own in Walton, New York. Since that time he has been continuously in business for himself except during his period of service in the World War.

Since 1927, Mr. Spinelli has been in business in Clayton, Union County, New Mexico. His work has become known in different places, from coast to coast, his customers sometimes ordering by mail, sometimes making personal visits for orders. One [?] recently came from Cooper, Texas, purposely to get his feet comfortably [?].

Much of Mr. Spinelli's work consist in making to order expensive boots of the cowboy type; for these his prices range from \$20.00 to \$35.00. Men's dress shoes, made to order, are priced from \$17.50 to \$22.50 per pair. One of his most particular jobs, he states, is the [?] of boots for a man with an artificial foot.

The material Mr. Spinelli uses is imported French Calf and Australian Kangaroo, which he buys from reliable wholesalers anywhere he can get it. J.H. DEAM.

At the second door west of First Street, on the south side 4 of Main Street, in Clayton, New Mexico, we find the sign "Harness and Saddles." Here is the place of business of J.H. Deam, veteran harness and saddle maker, whose manufacturing interests are now confined chiefly to saddle making.

Mr. Deam has been in the business over a long period of years, serving a three year's apprenticeship under A.B. Howell, at Lancaster Texas. Later, in [?], he made the first saddle that was ever made in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. he was making saddles in the old side-saddle days, [?] at present his saddles are the Western Stock Saddle type.

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Mr. Deam has been in business for himself in Clayton since 1928; most of his trade, however, is from out of the state. His prices range from [?] to \$95.00 and \$100.00 per saddle. He states that the saddle business is better right at this time than he ever knew it to be in peace times before.

Mr. Deam made another statement quite interesting to the uninitiated. Veteran [?] he is in the harness business, he states that only twice in his experience has he ever seen horse collars made. This, he says, is due to the fact that the fire [?] is so great in this part or the harness making business that it is always conducted clear [??] away from the rest of the harness making. THE DUNNS.

Still another interesting industry in leather is that being carried on the [?] Dunn and his wife, at their home about 6 miles south and 3 miles west of Clayton, New Mexico.

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These people are taxidermists, [?] and [?], and some truly beautiful pieces of work are being sent [?] from their place of business.

Mr. Dunn has been in this work as a profession only the last three years; but previous to that time it had been a lifetime hobby with him. He is what might be called a self trained artist—side from his own study and experimenting the only training he received was thro" watching the Jones Brothers, taxidermists in Denver.

Since about four years old, Mr. Dunn has studied animal life—either domestic animals or their wild [?], caught on the trapline, and it is his greatest aim and care now, in his chosen work, to get his a [?] true to life. Just a fraction of an inch's difference in [?—just a fleeting chance of expression—is all it takes, so [?], to spell the difference between success and failure in taxidermy.

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Included in their taxidermy work is the [?] of whole specimens of the following animals: — the porcupine, coyote, prairie [?] dog, squirrel, white rabbit, and the very rare ringtailed cat.

Still more rare, is the [?] of the [?]-horned deer which was [?] by the Dunns. They have [??] many antelope, deer and [?] herds, as well as the head of a Chinese leopard.

In addition to this, they have also made rugs from the skins of bear, lions—(one of the latter measuring 8ft.2in. from nose to tip of tail-) [?] from coyote, bobcats, and from one black Abyssinian 6 leopard, from Ethiopia.

They also mount all sorts of birds, each year shipping in several dozen pheasants from Michigan and Iowa. Mrs. [?] [Dunn?] does all the bird work.

To a lover of animal life, even tho" utterly ignorant of the art of taxidermy, it is a fascinating subject. Very briefly reviewed, the process is about as follows, for the larger animals. After the measurements are secured, a clay duplicate is made of the subject to be worked on. And here it might be interesting to the uninitiated to add that Mr. Dunn states that if the distance from the end of the nose to the eyes is know, all the other measurements may be secured from that, so uniformly so the animals adhere to the laws of [?] in their physical set-up.

After the clay model is completed, true to the original in muscular development and joints, a cast is made in plaster of Paris. This is in three sections—one for each side and one for the under body.

Then this plaster cast is removed in sections, and each section filled with strips of wet red building paper and paste, laid in, layers upon top of layers. When dry, they are trimmed until they fit exactly, then they are pasted together, and the specially prepared and tanned skin is put on the form. The eyes are all artificial, imported from Germany.

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Oil painting is used to restore the natural colors, and to provide background for the mounted specimens, this being also 7 Mrs. Dunn's work.

Besides the mounting and rug work, the Dunns also make all sorts of fur pieces—most of their work in this line at present being neck pieces. They buy their furs mostly from Missouri and Iowa.

In addition to these lines of work, they also make to order many varieties of leather articles, such as purses, belts and bill folds, and buckskin shirts, jackets, gloves and coats. They use as decorations the almost lost art of Mexican hand carving, brought over from Spain. In this work, the pattern is applied to the leather then, with a sharp instrument the surface is cut, following the outline of the pattern. Then the background is hammered down with some sharp pointed tool, about like the point of a nail. Sometimes the background is then stained, leaving the raised pattern standing out very clearly and making a beautiful piece of work.

The Dunns have all the work they can do—having customers from some seven at [?].
JOHN BEEBE.

Another artists in his line is the proprietor of Beebe's Jewelry Store, which is [?] on the Main Street of Clayton, just two doors east of First Street, on the south side.

Mr. Beebe served a four years apprenticeship under different jewelers, beginning his actual jeweler work in 1908, in Little Rock, Arkansas, for twelve years he has conducted his own business, having been in Clayton the past three and a half years.

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Besides being an expert and conscientious repair man, Mr. Beebe makes jewelry to order, working in platinum, gold and silver. He makes rings, pins, bracelets and necklaces, even to ornamental leg bands.

Mr. Beebe is an outstanding artist in his particular line, and his conscientious work and cheery courtesy have won him many friends wherever he is known.

Most towns have their jewelry repairmen, but comparatively few are fortunate enough to be able to have their jewelry manufactured right before their eyes, as the Clayton people do. MRS. FANNIE POTTER.

Working is still different fabric, we find another artist, in the person of Mrs. Fannie Potter, who lives two doors east of First, on the south side of Walnut Street, in Clayton, New Mexico.

Mrs. Potter, who is a native of Old Mexico, specializes in fine Spanish needlework, and has worked at her chosen art since early childhood. She received most of her training from her mother, later perfecting her work during five years spent in the Convent School at Agus Calientes, in Old Mexico. Now, she in turn, is passing on her skill to her young daughter Susie, who works with her and acts as her interpreter.

The skillful fingers of these two Spanish women have many beautiful work [?] to their credit—mostly in Mexican drawn work, Italian cut work and embroidery.

One can scarcely realize the infinite patience and exactitude that has directed these women in the setting of these beautiful painstaking stitches.

Besides the pieces she has made herself, Mrs. Potter has given private lessons for some fifteen years, and during the past three years has had a [?] teaching project for needlework in Clayton; during this teaching work numerous films for educational purposes have been made of her work.

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She sells to many out of the state points, and has donated several valuable pieces to different churches. THE CARROLL [GOAT?] DAIRY.

We do not present this goat dairy exactly as a work of art, but it is at least rather an unusual feature. It is located on the south side of Cherry Street, about midway of the block east of 3rd street, in Clayton, New Mexico.

Here we find the family of Lawton Carroll, who is the owner of the goats, altho" the work of the dairy is done by the two children—Billie, age 11 years, and Fred, aged 12 years.

They have six [?] goats and three young ones, and during the past two or three years that the dairy has operated, have served from 3 to 7 customers at a time, selling up to 6 or 7 quarts per day. Some of it is sold for the use of invalids or undernourished children. Billie states that the 6 goats, which he fed ordinary cow feed, and not tin [??], as generally reported, are kept for just about the [?] cost as the upkeep of one cow, and that the Carroll Goat Dairy [??] goat that gives her 2 1/2 quarts per day.

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Interview: John Beebe, Clayton, New Mexico

Interview: Fannie and Susie Potter, Clayton, New Mexico

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Interview: Billie Carroll, Clayton, New Mexico.